

Women's Cardiac Care Varies by Hospital



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MONDAY, June 27 (HealthDay News) -- While overall U.S. hospital outcomes for women with heart disease and stroke have improved, there's still a wide gap between the best- and worst-performing hospitals, says a study released Monday.

The *HealthGrades Women's Health Outcomes in U.S. Hospitals* study found that hospital survival rates for female cardiac disease and stroke patients increased by 11 percent from 2001 through 2003.

However, women treated at the best-performing hospitals had a 39 percent lower death rate than those treated at the poorest-performing hospitals, the study found.

The gap between the top- and bottom-ranked hospitals was even greater when it came to certain cardiac procedures. For example, women who underwent bypass surgery at hospitals in the top 15 percent ranking had a more than 46 percent lower death risk than women who had the same surgery at hospitals in the bottom 15 percent ranking.

The study analyzed outcomes among female cardiac and stroke patients at more than 1,500 hospitals in 17 states.

"We now know that women's average outcomes for cardiovascular care can vary by as much as 46 percent between the best-performing and poorest-performing hospitals. Women must arm themselves with information to make informed decisions and seek out the high-quality hospitals in their area," Dr. Samantha Collier, one of the study authors and HealthGrades' vice president of medical affairs, said in a prepared statement.

She pointed out that heart disease and stroke are the first- and third-leading killers of American women, respectively.

More information:

The American College of Physicians has more about [women and heart disease](#).